Nabbing of Veerappan

139. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what steps have been taken by Central and State Governments to nab the forest brigand Veerappan since December, 2002 following the killing of Shri Nagappa;

(b) the success achieved in the mission; and

(c) the reasons for prolonged failure of all efforts made in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI HARIN PATHAK): (a) to (c) Following the killing of Shri Nagappa, the State Governments of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka formulated a joint strategy for the purpose of nabbing Veerppan and reactivated the Special Task Force operations. The Central Government, after convening a meeting of both the State Governments, has provided assistance in form of arms/ ammunitions and other equipments. Besides, instructions have also been issued to provide assistance for aerial surveillance and quick transportation of troops and slithering operations at Air Station, Sulur. The Central Government has asked the Government of Karnataka to gear up ground intelligence gatherings and assured the State Governments to provide Central Para Military Forces at short notice to carry out assault operations.

Criteria for conferring Padma Awards

140. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what was the criteria for the conferring of Padma Awards;

(b) whether it is a fact that there was a report that persons not recommended by the concerned State Government have been awarded Padma Awards; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) In terms of the statutes and rules relating to Padma Awards, Padma Vibhushan is awarded for 'exceptional and distinguished service', Padma Bhushan for 'distinguished service of high order' and Padma Shri for 'distinguished service in any field.